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Report of the Economic and Social Council

Letter dated 12 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you, herewith, the text of the Marrakech Declaration adopted by the Fourth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, held in Marrakech on 11 and 12 December 2002, devoted to the theme, "Citizens, Businesses and Governments: Dialogue and Partnerships for Democracy and Development" (see annex).

The Forum was organized by the Kingdom of Morocco with the support of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. More than 1,000 participants from 120 countries attended the sessions of this Forum, including three Vice-Presidents, three Prime Ministers and 46 Ministers, in addition to several dozen high-level international leaders, business executives, heads of non-governmental organizations and academics.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 12.

(Signed) Mohamed **Bennouna**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex

Fourth Global Forum on Reinventing Government

Citizens, Businesses and Governments: Dialogue and Partnerships for Democracy and Development

(Marrakech, 11-13 December 2002)

Marrakech Declaration

We, the participants in the Fourth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 11 to 13 December 2002, devoted to the theme "Citizens, Businesses and Governments: Dialogue and Partnerships for Democracy and Development", have adopted the following Declaration:

I. Preamble

The Fourth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, organized by the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco in partnership with the United Nations, has brought together representatives of governments, international organizations, businesses and non-governmental organizations to discuss questions relating to good governance, sustainable development and the modernization of public administration. This is the fourth such Global Forum; the three previous ones were organized, respectively, in Washington, D.C. in 1999 by the Government of the United States of America, in Brasília in 2000 by the Government of Brazil and in Naples in 2001 by the Government of Italy. A number of pre-Forum workshops were organized by the United Nations and financed by the Government of Italy.

Referring to the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development of September 2002, which identifies dialogue and partnership as an appropriate platform for democracy and development, the participants in the Fourth Global Forum discussed the potential for making a culture of dialogue and partnership among citizens, the private sector and governments a vehicle for strengthening democracy and development.

The sessions of the Global Forum addressed the following four major themes:

- Strengthening public policies to foster partnerships between the government, civil society and businesses;
- Redefining the role of the State and its regulatory framework;
- Promoting local and regional partnerships for economic development; and
- Culture, values and development in the context of globalization.

Participants express their deep gratitude to His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, for bestowing on the Forum the great privilege of his Royal Message and his High Patronage. Participants request the Chairman of the Organizing Committee to convey to him a message of thanks and gratitude on their behalf. They warmly thank the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for its superb

organization of this important event, and the United Nations and other international partners for their support.

II. Underlying questions

II.1. The effective, efficient, legitimate and democratic exercise of power and authority with a view to attaining socio-economic goals should continue to be the ultimate objective of the concepts of governance and good government and their philosophical underpinning. During the past two decades, governance has become a concern for the developed, as much as the developing, countries, particularly since, at the dawn of this new century, they all face similar problems — corruption, constitutional crisis, economic stagnation, ethnic conflicts and rising crime — albeit on different scales. Civil war, terrorism, extremism, famine and epidemics may also be included in this list.

II.2. In the contemporary world order, governance-related problems transcend national borders. Major concerns such as reform of the international financial markets and the terms of trade, control of the impact of pollution on the environment, the risks of global warming and epidemics, emigration and refugee flows, the fight against extreme poverty, access to health care and services, and to water and food, and rampant urbanization are clearly governance issues that call for international cooperation. In resolving these problems, shared sovereignty could prove useful in tackling questions usually dealt with by nations individually.

II.3. Information and communication technologies (ICT) have increased citizens' access to information, while computer networks have opened new avenues of communication for political leaders and organized citizens' groups. Thus, the spread of television has transformed the conduct and holding of elections and the way in which governments and politicians monitor their images. This means that, in a number of situations, ICT have helped to disseminate sound democratic practices across the planet. For example, certain norms are gaining increasing acceptance and international support in such areas as human rights, environmental rights and democratic approaches. It is vital, however, to reduce the risk that basic freedoms and human rights could be violated by the misuse of ICT.

II.4. Moving towards democratic governance and good governance means focusing special attention on three interdependent processes: (i) establishing equality in social relations; (ii) developing productive activities and expanding markets; and (iii) moving towards a society with institutions it recognizes and accepts as being its own. Social democratization processes should be aimed at reducing extreme inequalities (which create exclusions incompatible with democracy), promoting respect for human rights, providing basic social services and developing civil society.

II.5. Experience in a number of regions throughout the world has shown that democracy, on the one hand, and economic growth and modernization, on the other, are not incompatible. Moreover, the new context for economic growth demands greater flexibility and adaptation and a rapid response by businesses, governments and civil society. Only an open, transparent, decentralized and participatory political system can provide an environment conducive to developing effective partnerships among actors in the productive process, civil society, and governments with a view to meeting the demands of economic modernization and international competition.

Only a system of this nature can facilitate fruitful dialogue among citizens, businesses and governments in order to resolve a wide range of social issues and ensure the participation of all citizens in instituting good governance.

II.6. As we move towards initiating the dialogues and the partnerships that lead to an organized society, an effective productive system and a representative and decentralized state capable of dealing with the interests and demands of different social groups, a major obstacle will have to be overcome: national identity versus the need to set common long-term goals. National identity is a permanent construction; it is a dynamic process by which each generation strives to strike a harmonious balance between the values of the past and those which must be formed to meet the challenges of the new globalized world. New paths for reconciling the values of local identity and universally shared values must therefore be found. The latter are values which create loyalty to communities and, at the same time, exhort citizens to share a vision of the future based on, *inter alia*, solidarity, mutual trust and respect, moral conduct, environmental awareness, the responsible exercise of authority and the equal treatment of others. This lies at the heart of close interaction between culture and development in the context of humanized globalization.

III. General recommendations on best practices

III.1. Involving citizens in redefining the role of the State

Free, responsible, creative citizens are the fundamental basis for the establishment of any democracy. At the same time, redefining the role of the State means bringing it close to the citizens and placing them at the heart of political processes.

Good governance cannot be based only on the good will of leaders or the wise theories of experts; it is a process through which citizens assume leadership in order to guide and master their own destiny. The development or strengthening of citizens' autonomy requires high-quality, long-term education for all; rigorous defence of human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world; the expansion of competition and participatory democracy; a reduction in bureaucracy and authoritarianism; and the encouragement of creative initiatives by citizens.

III.2. Encouraging local communities to take their own well-being in hand

Historically, centralized nation States have led to progress. Now that life in society has become more complex, the societal problems inherent in daily life have become more diversified, while citizens are increasingly likely to demand higher-quality education and are thus becoming aware of what is at stake in modern democratic life and eager to take their own affairs in hand. Central Governments can no longer meet all expectations. Redefining the role of the State now means rebuilding the State through a "bottom-up" approach. Since the best solutions to the world's real problems are found on the ground, local communities must retain or reassume the necessary power, staff and resources to address the collective problems of concern to them.

III.3. Encouraging businesses to manage sustainable growth and wealth

Economic growth is a strong engine for human well-being. Businesses have become active in society at the local, national and global levels, and must develop a partnership and/or sponsorship relationship with trade unions, the media, sports clubs, universities, the arts, philanthropic organizations and other non-governmental organizations. The promotion of businesses has become an important means of opening societies and improving their system of governance. Governments, civil society and businesses should work to achieve greater confidence and improved dialogue and cooperation among themselves. This requires policies to combat unfair competition such as monopolistic or bureaucratic privileges, complicated administrative procedures and unnecessary bureaucracy. In particular, small businesses, as the greatest source of jobs, deserve special assistance through financing, technical assistance and tax breaks, and large businesses should be more closely involved in the development of small businesses. On the other hand, special efforts should be made to ensure that all businesses, especially multinational and transnational corporations, comply with environmental regulations, respect labour law and employ fair trade practices. Above all, businesses are urged to play their proper role in eliminating inequality, complying with legislation that prohibits child labour and making every effort to ensure sustainable human development.

III.4. Mobilizing civil society to face societal and cultural challenges

The emergence of non-governmental organizations of civil society as a driving force towards a better future for humankind is an important modern event. These organizations have proved their effectiveness in areas such as human rights, environmental protection, improvement in the status of women, local development, health care, education and literacy training, and humanitarian and social work to combat poverty and marginalization. Governments and international agencies are urged to rely more heavily on non-governmental organizations in launching properly implemented projects which address social problems. The organizations, for their part, must improve their networks for interaction between communities and nations throughout the world.

III.5. Ensuring that Governments are fully responsible and accountable

People need better, smaller Governments which cultivate their real strengths based on adaptability and flexibility, and eliminate useless bulk. If citizens, local communities, businesses and civil society genuinely play their proper roles, they can relieve States of unnecessary burdens, allowing them to focus on their essential mission of developing appropriate strategies, ensuring the equity and quality of standards and rules, enacting fair, effective regulations, facilitating the resolution of conflicts, providing for the independent evaluation of public policies, and managing the risks and uncertainties inherent in their mandate in a responsible manner. This mandate is fulfilled within a framework of close cooperation with social partners and non-governmental organizations, and through democratic participation in the decision-making process. Public policies should be implemented in cooperation with the citizens, peoples and partners concerned, and there should be public follow-up to and assessment of activities in terms of their costs and benefits, successes and failures, and direct or indirect impact.

III.6. Creating and developing new types of partnerships

Today, there are many opportunities for fruitful partnerships in new areas, with new instruments and for new players. The underlying principle of these various activities, which include the arts, waste-water management and the launching of small-scale projects in remote rural villages and large-scale projects at the global level, is that of synergy.

There are many examples of imaginative partnerships which have succeeded in solving common problems and in creating a favourable environment for everyday work. No effort should be spared to disseminate this experience, share its results and capitalize on the lessons learned to build new and more suitable forms of partnership. Non-governmental organizations, businesses, local communities and State agencies are urged to adopt proactive partnership approaches.

III.7. Using information and communications technologies (ICT) to reinvent government

Initial experiments have shown that ICT provide instruments which can be used by partnerships to reinvent government and sustain economic and social growth. These technologies make it possible to inform citizens and Governments instantly, facilitate administrative procedures, give users an opportunity to monitor the handling of their files and to interact with the system, and ensure rapid, equitable access to information at the submission, examination and selection stages of tendering.

The privacy of citizens must be protected and channels of communication between citizens and their Governments must be maintained. Even more important, ICT can reduce bureaucracy, combat corruption and provide a neutral interface between officials and users. Thus, the progressive implementation of e-government is a challenge which must be met by democratic States. Even in the developed countries, the information revolution has the potential to speed up the democratic process.

III.8. Improving global solidarity to make the world a better place

Reinventing government is made an even more urgent challenge by the need to improve the living conditions of billions of people who face poverty, disease, illiteracy, limited access to water, and ethnic, religious or national conflicts. Today there is a problem of uneven access by the developed and the developing countries to the benefits of globalization. The vision of "one world" and of interdependence between people is incompatible with that divide. Moreover, poverty is a fertile ground for dictatorships and extremism. Thus, for both ethical and political reasons, leadership is a responsibility as well as a privilege. The major Powers, under United Nations auspices, should follow the same standards on issues such as peacekeeping, conflict resolution and environmental protection.

The situation in Africa deserves special attention in that regard. Africa is capable of breaking the vicious circle of poverty, conflicts and suffering and of overcoming the pitfalls of development. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is indeed a major step towards this goal. Its success will depend on strong international solidarity; solutions to be considered include

unhindered access to the international market, mobility of capital and technologies and proper public debt management.

III.9. Building universality on the basis of intercultural respect and dialogue

The legacy of human civilization keeps pace with the development of that civilization. Shared universal values, norms and knowledge provide a strong common cultural dimension. However, globalization must not eliminate local cultures and those cultures, in turn, must not turn their back on universalism.

This powerful trend can be pursued through the promotion of fundamental values which allow people from different backgrounds to live together in peace and to interact fruitfully on the basis of the principles of tolerance and mutual respect. Each culture, each civilization has the legitimate right to criticize others, but it must also cast a critical eye on itself. Never before has humankind shared such a common destiny; globalization appears to be an irreversible process, but it must be controlled. All participants in this complex process, including international organizations, Governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses, academics and artists, are increasingly aware of what is at stake, of the opportunities and of the risks.

III.10. Increasing the support provided by international development partners

In order to support the Governments of developing countries, the international community, including bilateral and multilateral agencies, must support mechanisms for the exchange of experience and new ideas in the area of governance and public administration through agencies such as the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance and through the Conference of New or Restored Democracies to be held in Mongolia in June 2003; in that connection, the participants welcomed the recent General Assembly resolution inviting the United Nations Secretariat to continue to provide substantial support for future Global Forums.

In that spirit, the United Nations, the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, donor countries and other international bodies are requested to further strengthen their efforts to promote good governance and the use of ICT for democracy and development.

NEPAD, a new element of the international governance system, is also requested to pay continuing attention to reforms of the democratization process in Africa and, to that end, to build partnerships with both the developed and the developing countries.

Lastly, we call on non-governmental organizations, private enterprise and Governments in both the developed and the developing countries to work synergistically to narrow the gap between citizens and their Governments, develop mutual confidence and implement a common vision of sustainable social and economic development.

III.11. Follow-up by the Government of Morocco

Reiterating their deep and sincere thanks to the Government of Morocco, the participants suggested that, as presiding country for the Group of 77 in 2003, Morocco should take appropriate action to promote the implementation of previous

recommendations by world leaders, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society.

III.12. Fifth Global Forum

The participants welcomed the Mexican Government's generous invitation to host the Fifth Global Forum in Mexico City in November 2003.

**General Assembly**

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**Financial reports and audited financial statements,
and reports of the Board of Auditors**

**Financial reports and audited financial statements, and
reports of the Board of Auditors**

**Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions**

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Board of Auditors on the voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 2002,¹ its report on the implementation of its recommendations relating to the biennium 2000-2001 (A/58/114) and its progress report on the capital master plan (A/58/321). The Advisory Committee also received a special report on the management of staff training in the United Nations (including peacekeeping operations) and its funds and programmes (see annex). In addition, the Advisory Committee had before it the second report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations (A/58/97) and of the United Nations funds and programmes (A/58/97/Add.1) for the biennium ended 31 December 2001. During its consideration of the matter, the Committee met with the United Nations Audit Operations Committee.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

2. The Board of Auditors audited the financial statements of the voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2002 and the operations of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at its headquarters in Geneva and at its offices in Bangladesh, Guinea, Myanmar and Thailand for the same period. The main findings of the Board are listed in the summary of its report.¹

3. A number of issues raised by the Board were also addressed by the Advisory Committee in the context of its consideration of the programme budget of UNHCR for 2004 (A/AC.96/979 and Corr.1). Since the report of the Committee



(A/AC.96/979/Add.1) is submitted directly to the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, it summarizes those concerns below.

4. The Board of Auditors informed the Advisory Committee that, without qualifying its opinion on the 2002 financial statements, its audit opinion had been "modified", drawing attention to its finding on the adequacy of assurance obtained by UNHCR that funds had been properly used for the purpose intended and on the significant understatement of some \$70 million in the disclosure of non-expendable property.² The Board also drew attention to the fact that there was a lack of adequate assurance that all funds provided to implementing partners had been used for the intended purposes. As at June 2003, the use of \$14.2 million reported as expenditure in the financial statements remained unjustified.³ The Committee was informed that, during meetings held by the Board with UNHCR management in September 2003, UNHCR confirmed that it had taken measures to resolve this problem. The Committee was further informed that UNHCR had reported to the Board that, as at 24 July 2003, the outstanding amount yet to be justified had been reduced to \$6.8 million.

5. The Advisory Committee points out that the Board noted once again that UNHCR ended the year 2002 with a significant shortfall of \$50 million, with total expenditure amounting to some \$908 million. The Board found that the increase in expenditure, mostly from general and supplementary programme funds, was not matched by appropriate resources.⁴ The statement of income and expenditure and changes in reserves and fund balances of the voluntary funds administered by UNHCR did not include \$21 million received from the United Nations regular budget, which is recorded in the United Nations general fund.⁵

6. The Advisory Committee notes the observation of the Board that reserves had been reduced from \$196 million in 1998 to \$120 million in 2002 due to the successive shortfall of income over expenditure and that non-earmarked available reserves were down to \$50 million.⁶

7. The Advisory Committee notes that the Board reiterated its view that the issue of non-funded liabilities for end-of-service and post-retirement benefits was a matter of concern, especially for a voluntarily funded programme such as UNHCR. Unfunded liabilities for after-service health insurance (calculated on an accrued liability basis), accrued annual leave and termination benefits amounted to \$263 million.⁷

8. The comments and observations of the Board of Auditors on human resources management in UNHCR are contained in paragraphs 69 to 133 of its report, and its main findings are set out in items (g) to (k) of the summary of the report.¹

9. The Advisory Committee notes that the Board found that for the period from 1998 to 2002, the number of staff employed had consistently exceeded the number of staff posts. The gap ranged from 104 posts in 2000 to 952 in 2002 (20 per cent more than the posts allotted for 2002).⁸ In its report on the UNHCR programme budget for 2004, the Committee shared the concern of the Board about the gap between staff members and posts and the increasing number of staff charged to temporary assistance (which funds staff not linked to a post) under "other staff costs" (see A/AC.96/979/Add.1, para. 16).

10. The Advisory Committee notes that the Board has commented again on the issue of UNHCR "project staff". The Office of the UNHCR Inspector General and

the Office of Internal Oversight Services have also reviewed this matter in the past. The internal auditors have observed that UNHCR project staff comprise individuals employed nominally by other organizations but who in fact work under direct UNHCR management in administrative positions (such as protection assistants, administrative, information technology or logistics assistants, clerks, radio operators, drivers, guards, etc.) with functions generally equivalent to those of staff at the General Service and National Officer level. The main reasons for resorting to the use of these staff, according to the internal auditors, had been to recruit outside the authorized staffing table, thus circumventing the established budgetary procedures.⁹ During its review of the UNHCR programme budget for 2004, the Committee, at its request, was informed of steps taken, as at 5 September 2003, to address the situation of the remaining 145 project staff (see A/AC.96/979/Add.1, para. 17 and annex II).

11. The Advisory Committee notes that the Board of Auditors has made specific recommendations on the management of UNHCR "staff-in-between-assignments".¹⁰ The Board indicated that at the end of December 2002, 113 Professional and 16 General Service staff members were without assignment after the expiration of their standard assignment but remained on special leave with full pay. Overall, Professional staff were without assignment for 350 person-years from 1998 to 2002, at the cost of several million dollars a year, according to the Board. Such staff undertake temporary assignments for which they are qualified, but a minority are not tasked with any assignment at all, some of them for an extended period of time (for example, as at 1 October 2002, 3 D-1 and 1 P-5 staff members had not worked at all for UNHCR for 15, 30, 43 and 44 months respectively, while being on special leave with full pay for the entire period).¹¹ During its review of the UNHCR annual programme budget for 2004, the Committee expressed concern and requested that the High Commissioner take urgent action to comply with the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and report on the management of "staff-in-between-assignments" in the next budget report. The Committee also welcomed the intention of the High Commissioner to introduce reforms, be more transparent and exercise stronger control of the staffing table (see A/AC.96/979/Add.1, para. 19).

12. The Board's findings on specific allowances and benefits for UNHCR staff posted in hardship duty stations are discussed in paragraphs 125 to 133 of its report.¹ The Advisory Committee agrees with the view of the Board that the creation of a specific staff allowance, the housing maintenance element, exceeded the delegation of authority granted to the High Commissioner and is not in line with the standard United Nations provisions in similar locations and circumstances. The Board has recommended that UNHCR review the legal basis of its specific allowances, in consultation with the International Civil Service Commission, as appropriate, with a view to ensuring compliance with the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules.¹²

Implementation of recommendations

13. The report of the Board of Auditors on the implementation of its recommendations relating to the biennium 2000-2001 (A/58/114), updated as at 25 June 2003, covers 15 United Nations entities on which the Board reports on a biennial basis. The report includes comments by the Board based on the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of recommendations by the United Nations (A/58/97) and its funds and programmes (A/58/97/Add.1). Entities on

which the Board reports annually (United Nations peacekeeping operations and, as discussed above, the voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) are not included. Their follow-up is, as usual, covered in an annex to the reports of the Board to the General Assembly (see A/58/114, para. 3).

14. The report includes comments of the Board on the implementation of recommendations by the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund based on the information that the Fund provided directly to the Board (*ibid.*, para. 30) and on the implementation of recommendations by the Office of Legal Affairs on the handling of arbitration and claims cases (*ibid.*, para. 16).

15. The Advisory Committee notes that the number of recommendations of the Board has more than doubled over the past three bienniums, from 156 for the biennium 1996-1997 and 208 for the biennium 1998-1999 to 337 for the biennium 2000-2001. Of the 337 recommendations made by the Board, only 117 (or 35 per cent) had been fully implemented by June 2003, while 195 (or 58 per cent) were under implementation and 24 (or 7 per cent) had not been implemented at all. The remaining three recommendations (or 1 per cent) were overtaken by events (see *ibid.*, para. 13).

16. The Advisory Committee was informed that all organizations had provided a time frame for the implementation of the majority of recommendations and had disclosed the office-holders to be held accountable for this task. The Board indicated that, in general, the organizations had mechanisms to monitor the implementation of its recommendations. The Committee notes that the Board intends to follow up on the effectiveness of these mechanisms, which should be reflected in the rate of implementation.

17. The Board noted that the text of the recommendations relating to the previous biennium and the gist of the comments on their implementation were repeated in the two reports of the Administration, pertaining to the United Nations and to its funds and programmes (A/58/97/Add.1), as well as in the report of the Board (A/58/114). This information could be presented in a single document instead of three, achieving savings for all parties concerned (see *ibid.*, paras. 6-8). The Advisory Committee notes that the Board of Auditors has recommended that the three reports be consolidated into a single report to be submitted by the Board, and that the Administration has agreed to the recommendation. The Committee was informed that the Board would, two years from now, present the text of the recommendation then the full comments of the Administration, provided that they were kept to a reasonable length, and finally the comments of the Board. This is to be implemented for the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, if the Assembly accepts the recommendation. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve the Board's recommendation.**

18. In response to a request of the Advisory Committee regarding reporting on the impact of audit recommendations, the Committee was informed that a concept paper on this issue had been prepared by the Audit Operations Committee containing a definition of the responsibilities of the Board and those of the administrations of the various entities. In the opinion of the Audit Operations Committee, it would be the primary responsibility of the administrations to design the impact indicators and to measure the impact of the recommendations for review by the Board. The Committee was informed that this concept paper had been presented to the

administrations for comments. As a second step in the consultation, the Audit Operations Committee planned to meet with representatives of the administrations with a view to finalizing the approach and the procedures, including a timeline for implementation. The Committee welcomes this development, which would be consistent with the results-based concept. **The Committee trusts that these measures will ultimately address the concerns it has expressed in the past and looks forward to receiving information on progress made in this matter.**

Capital master plan

19. The Board of Auditors provided to the Advisory Committee a brief report on the capital master plan (A/58/321). In its resolution 57/292 of 20 December 2002, the General Assembly requested the Board and all other relevant oversight bodies to initiate immediate oversight activities on the capital master plan and to report to it annually thereon.

20. The Board informed the Advisory Committee that the activity and actual expenditure related to the capital master plan were limited at this stage. The first audit of the capital master plan financial statements will cover the biennium ending 31 December 2003. The Board's first report on the capital master plan will accordingly be transmitted to the General Assembly in time for consideration at the fifty-ninth session.

Management of staff training

21. The Board of Auditors has conducted a horizontal review of staff training in response to requests from both the Advisory Committee and the Secretary-General. The scope of the review of the Board and its main findings and recommendations are included in the annex below.

22. The Advisory Committee will revert to the comments of the Board on the management of staff training during its review of the budgets of peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 and also, as appropriate, during its review of activities financed by the United Nations regular budget and the budgets of the United Nations funds and programmes.

Notes

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 5E (A/58/5/Add.5), chap. II.*

² *Ibid.*, chap. III.

³ *Ibid.*, chap. II, para. 68.

⁴ *Ibid.*, tables 1 and 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, chap. V, note 1 to the financial statements.

⁶ *Ibid.*, chap. II, paras. 18 and 20.

⁷ *Ibid.*, chap. II, table 2 and para. 22, and chap. V, note 13 to the financial statements.

⁸ *Ibid.*, chap. II, para. 69 and table 5.

⁹ *Ibid.*, paras. 76-82.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 115.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, paras. 111-113.

¹² *Ibid.*, para. 127.

Annex

Review by the Board of Auditors of the management of staff training in the United Nations and its funds and programmes

1. Scope of the review

1. The Board of Auditors reviewed the management of training across the 18 departments, funds, programmes and institutes (all designated here as "entities" or "United Nations common system") covered in the Board's annual or biennial reports to the General Assembly. They reported some \$59 million in direct training expenditures for the biennium 2000-2001 (peacekeeping operations not included). The Board dedicated 9 reviews to training, and the issue was reviewed during the course of 35 general audits between July 2002 and April 2003. They included the Secretariat's Office of Human Resources Management,^a 11 other entities and 14 peacekeeping and political missions, or some two thirds of the entities audited by the Board. Findings were addressed in separate management letters, followed by a comprehensive management letter issued to all organizations, of which the present report is a shortened version. Their replies were taken fully into account. This report provides an overview of the findings and recommendations common to all or most organizations, unless otherwise specified; specific findings reported here are simply examples.

2. The review was conducted principally in accordance with financial regulation 7.5 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and the annex thereto, and with the common auditing standards adopted by the Panel of External Auditors of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Most data were compiled as reported by the Administration, without being submitted to an in-depth audit by the Board.

3. The Board's focus was on the economy and efficiency of administrative processes as compared to sound training management principles: reporting; policy and planning; governance, knowledge-sharing, inter-agency coordination and support; and evaluation. The pedagogical contents were not reviewed, since this would have required specialized resources beyond the scope of the review.

4. The findings set out below are those that, in the Board's view, are of overall and particular importance relating to the management of training. They usually do not apply equally to all organizations; training management differs from one to the next. However, after considering the replies received, the Board is satisfied that the present report reflects the average situation.

5. The Board found a high level of staff commitment to training. Although many positive aspects are identified in the report, the review focused on the risks and on the areas for potential improvement.

2. Main findings

6. The main findings are as follows:

(a) The priority and perspective conferred by senior management on training and staff development were at the time of the review generally in conformity with international best principles and practices. Training policies, guidelines and plans

were frequently formulated in line with this priority; however, they were sometimes incomplete, missing or belatedly endorsed;

(b) Management information system, whether computerized or not, as applied to training expenditures did not always provide sufficient data to lead to well-informed planning decisions and monitoring. Due to the heterogeneity and sometimes the inadequacy of statistical and accounting frameworks, criteria and methods, indicators were not always comprehensive and reliable. Decentralization had led in some entities to a loss of reporting on activities;

(c) The United Nations Secretariat itself, which accounts for over one third of the total, could benefit from comprehensive reporting that would include not only training activities funded under the regular budget, but also those funded by extrabudgetary resources;

(d) Data could not be aggregated or compared without a significant margin of error at the United Nations common system level. Such comparisons might enhance planning decisions;

(e) Overall staff figures — indicating the total number of potential trainees — were not consistently reported system-wide due to the diversity in contractual status, duration and reporting methods. The entities under the scope of the Board of Auditors total: 28,103 of the 44,497 permanent staff members with appointments for a period of one year or more (excluding National Professional Officers and other employees with special contractual arrangements) reflected in the latest United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination tables for the United Nations common system as at 31 December 2001; or almost double that figure: 54,953 of the 80,082 active participants reported as at the same date by the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund with contracts of more than six months and with pension benefits;

(f) As a result, ratios such as the percentage of training expenditures to total staff costs — a commonly used indicator in some Member States — could seldom be accurately computed;

(g) The United Nations entities seldom compared training ratios with those of other institutions. The few ratios available, such as the above-mentioned percentage of training expenditures compared to total staff costs, were often several times less than those indicated in most private sector benchmark data, although they are close to the figures provided by a few other international organizations. There might be a risk that resources devoted to training are insufficient to achieve the objectives;

(h) Training managers and units provided instances of successful planning, knowledge-sharing and delivery at many levels. Policy-setting and planning were nevertheless often deficient. Systems to optimize the planning of limited training resources were usually in place at large United Nations sites, such as the various headquarters locations and offices away from Headquarters;

(i) Regarding governance, the United Nations common system appeared to be in line with the trend that is moving away from a hierarchical organization towards decentralized networks of partnerships and alliances;

(j) The creation, effective January 2002, of the United Nations System Staff College, was too recent to allow an appraisal of its impact, although it had been in

existence previously as a project. Its output so far has been limited to a few programmes for a small percentage of the Professional staff in the short term;

(k) Outside the Staff College, synergy at the common system and decentralized levels could be improved. Inter-agency benchmarking and coordination was informal and did not result in consistent system-wide methods for developing and sharing reporting tools, materials or rosters of training providers at all appropriate geographical levels. The attainment of the goal of creating a United Nations common system "culture"^b through training may therefore be handicapped, impairing the efficiency of significant human resources and expertise. However, in July 2003, after the Board's audit, the Human Resources Network of the High-level Committee on Management endorsed an organizational learning framework aimed at sharing and developing training practices and tools system-wide;

(l) Despite instructions regarding staff consultation on major human resources issues, management did not always include training issues in such consultations;

(m) Since strategic targets and achievements were less than reliably quantified, the evaluation systems used for monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of training programmes were for some organizations inadequate. The measurement and the benchmarking of the effectiveness of training performance were in progress, but were still far from extensive. While this situation was found in many other institutions, it could impair results-based budgeting and the successful attainment of goals;

(n) Internal and external audits have shown many occurrences of a lack of adequate reporting, planning and coordination, leading to the risk of cost-inefficiency. This situation may affect the cost-effectiveness of the many human resources development efforts and thereby the attainment of the objectives set by the governing bodies.

3. Main recommendations

7. The Board's main recommendations are that the concerned organizations should, as relevant to their particular situation:

(a) Report on training activities and costs to its governing body and its senior management, as well as communicate such information to all staff members;

(b) Review management information systems in order to monitor training in a reliable manner;

(c) Consider sharing a set of similar core indicators across the United Nations common system to facilitate benchmarking in terms of deliverables and costs, such as a ratio comparing training expenditures against overall staff employed, including short-term staff assigned to medium-term or permanent tasks;

(d) Review whether the present level of funding for training and the results are consistent with the priority placed on staff development and take appropriate steps to align policy with the available means;

(e) Define or update and disseminate clear training policies and guidelines where this has not been achieved in line with the organizational learning framework endorsed by the Human Resources Network in July 2003;

(f) Develop rosters of training providers at the appropriate levels (headquarters, regional, country), to be shared among organizations;

(g) Develop more formally inter-agency sharing of training knowledge and materials, taking into consideration the role of the United Nations System Staff College;

(h) Review the governance infrastructure for training;

(i) Increase the evaluation of the results achieved through training to ascertain its impact on the effectiveness of operations.

8. The Board's conclusion is that there is room for improvement in the management of staff training to better align the human resources capacity of the United Nations with its mission, structure and culture. Such steps should aim at ensuring adequate reporting on training resources, outputs and performance through the use of more accurate and comprehensive management information systems and more cohesive management of planning, reporting and knowledge-sharing.

Notes

^a The Office of Human Resources Management provided at the time of the audit regular budget funding for all Secretariat entities financed by the regular budget, including those in offices away from Headquarters, and for three peacekeeping missions, namely, the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization and the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories.

^b This concept appears in a number of reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, most recently in the report on strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change (A/57/387 and Corr.1).



General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 September 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session

Agenda item 79

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The report of the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization covering the year 2002 is submitted herewith to the General Assembly pursuant to the provisions of article IV, paragraph 1, of the Agreement to Regulate the Relationship between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission (General Assembly resolution 54/280, annex). The Executive Secretary will report on the recent activities of the Commission in his statement before the First Committee of the General Assembly.
 2. Since only a limited number of copies of the report are available, it has not been possible to make a full distribution. Delegations are therefore requested to have the copies transmitted to them available during discussion of this item.
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General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 September 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session

Agenda item 143 (a)

**Financing of the activities arising from Security Council
resolution 687 (1991): United Nations Iraq-Kuwait
Observation Mission**

Financing of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

The present note provides updated information on the status of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission and sets out the reasons why a revised budget for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 will not be submitted to the General Assembly.



1. The proposed budget for the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 contained in document A/57/664 dated 18 December 2002 and Corr.1 dated 28 February 2003 was submitted to the General Assembly in anticipation of the continuation of the Mission.
2. In his letter dated 3 April 2003 (S/2003/400) addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General that the members of the Council had noted that UNIKOM was unable to fulfil its mandate as a result of the situation on the ground, and concurred with his recommendation that a peacekeeping presence be retained at an appropriate level for a further three months, until 6 July 2003, subject to any further decision the Council might take regarding the UNIKOM mandate.
3. The Secretary-General subsequently proposed interim financing arrangements for UNIKOM for the four-month period from 1 July to 31 October 2003 in his note dated 14 May 2003 (A/57/811). The Secretary-General also indicated in his note that, subject to the decision of the Council in July, a revised budget proposal for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 would be submitted to the General Assembly for review during the main part of its fifty-eighth session.
4. Under the circumstances, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions recommended in paragraph 5 of its report of 16 May 2003 (A/57/813) that, in lieu of an appropriation, commitment authority be granted to use the available cash balance to cover the requirements for the maintenance of the Mission for the four-month period from 1 July to 31 October 2003.
5. The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/330 of 18 June 2003, therefore authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$12 million for the period from 1 July to 31 October 2003, to be financed from the accumulated fund balance in the Special Account for the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission.
6. The Security Council, in its resolution 1490 (2003) of 3 July 2003, decided to continue the mandate of UNIKOM for a final period until 6 October 2003. A one-month liquidation period will follow.
7. In view of the closure of the Mission, no revised budget will be submitted to the General Assembly for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004. On the basis of the current level of expenditures for UNIKOM, the \$12 million commitment authority approved by the General Assembly would suffice to cover the remaining activities of the Mission, including its liquidation. Actual expenditures incurred during this period will be reported to the General Assembly in the context of the performance report.



General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 September 2003

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Fifty-eighth session

Agenda item 20

**Support by the United Nations system of the efforts
of Governments to promote and consolidate new or
restored democracies**

**Letter dated 18 September 2003 from the Permanent
Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General**

It gives me a great pleasure to forward herewith the Ulaanbaatar Declaration (see annex I) and Plan of Action (annex II) adopted by the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, held in Ulaanbaatar from 10 to 12 September 2003.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annexes could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 20.

(Signed) **Choisuren Baatar**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex I to the letter dated 18 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

(FINAL)

THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF NEW OR RESTORED DEMOCRACIES

**ULAANBAATAR, MONGOLIA
10-12 September 2003**

Ulaanbaatar Declaration

Democracy, Good Governance and Civil Society

- i. We, the Governments and representatives of nations around the world gathered at the 5th International Conference of New or Restored Democracies,**
- ii. Declaring that democratic governance is legitimate and responsive, representative and participatory, transparent and accountable, and rights and law based. While it empowers, it offers checks and balances on authority to prevent abuse and enhances the promotion and protection of human rights, gender equality, and respect for the rule of law. We will endeavour to ratify, accept, or accede to the international human rights and international humanitarian law instruments;
- iii. Democracy provides legitimacy to governments by rooting their actions in the will of the governed, builds greater success for national programs by engaging the energies of the governed, increases the potential for long-term sustainable economic development, and fosters human security by providing avenues for dissent to be expressed in legitimate, non-violent forms.
- iv. Declaring further that the full, active and unobstructed participation of civil society, as they employ democratic and non-violent means, is essential for democratic governments to always remain responsive to the people's needs and wishes, including between elections;
- v. Recognizing that new or restored democracies are today facing many challenges brought about by both national and international forces. Democracy has advanced rapidly in the last thirty years in many countries but we have also witnessed instances where democratic structures have come under direct threat by internal or external destabilisation forces of a military, political or economic nature;
- vi. Recognising further that new or restored democracies also face the challenge of consolidating their sovereignty, their democratic achievements, of making democracy itself an irreversible process, and of ensuring that all members of society benefit from the democratisation process and are able to participate fully in the new systems of governance;
- vii. Recalling that fifteen years have passed since the first International Conference of New or Restored Democracies (ICNRD) and that in these years democracy has developed and consolidated in many new and restored democracies, while some others have experienced failures due, inter alia, to armed conflicts or the undermining effect of organised crime, terrorist acts or repression;
- viii. Recalling further that in the intervening period we have witnessed a rise in international terrorism. We fully support the increasing international efforts to address it. We reiterate our condemnation of all acts, methods and practices of terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations. In this regard, we underline the need to take the necessary steps to enhance international cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism, including measures that

address factors that foster and sustain extremism and violence. Such efforts should comply with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law.

ix. Recognizing also the foregoing challenges, and in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation, desiring to open up a path for further strengthening the global democratic movement by the consolidation of new or restored democracies, as well as supporting other states in introducing democratic reforms for the benefit of all members of society. Democracy should be rooted in the Constitution of the State to provide permanency and a legal foundation;

x. Reaffirming the principles and commitments as endorsed in:

- The Manila Declaration adopted in June 1988 at the First International Conference of New or Restored Democracies;
- The Managua Declaration and plan of action adopted in July 1994 at the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies;
- The Final Document of Bucharest entitled "The review of the situation and recommendations" adopted in September 1997 at the Third International Conference of New or Restored Democracies; and
- The Cotonou Declaration adopted in December 2000 at the Fourth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies,

xi. Recognising further that:

- Democratic societies have certain qualities which we consider superior to others, particularly those concerned with their participatory, representative and equitable nature;
- Democracy, development and respect for human rights and of fundamental freedoms are interdependent and synergic; and
- Democracy is an ongoing process,

xii. Dedicate our efforts to help new and restored democracies to both consolidate and deepen democracy in new or restored democracies.

xiii. Endorse the following principles and agree to work towards implementing them in accordance to international, regional and national Plans of Action adopted in pursuance to this conference.

xiv. Reaffirm our full adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and underline our commitment to strengthen the United Nations as the principal international multilateral forum.

I. A democratic society is a just and responsible society.		
1	A just and responsible society cannot tolerate poverty and will work towards eliminating inequality and promoting equality of opportunities in our societies.	
	1 a	We will endeavour to promote sustainable development and economic growth from which all members of our respective societies will benefit.
	1 b	We will strive to ensure access to all members of society basic services, including health care, education, clean water supply, basic sanitation and affordable energy and communications.
	1 c	We will endeavour to ensure that globalisation does not have a negative but a positive effect on the poor, rural, or unskilled members of society.
2	A just and responsible society provides safety nets to the marginalised in society, with the assistance, if needed, of the international community.	
	2 a	We will endeavour to reskill workers who are made redundant as a result of economic reform or technological changes.
3	A just and responsible society prioritises sustainable development.	
	3 a	We undertake to address the urban/rural divide in the delivery of development services, and prioritise rural development.
	3 b	We undertake to address, with urgency, environmental problems.
	3 c	We exert our efforts to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals.
4	A just and responsible society is committed to human security and human development.	
	4 a	We undertake to promote human security and human development to achieve cultural, economic, social, and political progress.

	4 b	We uphold political freedom and participation as important for human security and human development and reaffirm that fundamental aspects of human security and human development, including investing in education and health, increasing people's safety from the threat of violence, promoting equitable economic growth, and ensuring participation through democratic governance are mutually reinforcing principles leading to a better future for our societies.
	4 c	We undertake to incorporate in our respective national development strategies the above fundamental principles of human security and human development.
II. A democratic society is an inclusive and participatory society.		
5		An inclusive and participatory society must provide access and ensure participation of its citizens in the national decision-making process.
	5 a	We will endeavour to adjust our institutions to better serve the goals of democracy.
	5 b	We will endeavour to strengthen representative democracy - parliamentary and electoral systems.
	5 c	We undertake to take all possible measures to encourage the full participation of women in the electoral process and increased representation of women at all levels, including legislatures.
	5 d	We will pursue, where necessary, electoral reforms with the participation of political parties and other relevant segments of civil society to uphold the principle of holding free, fair and periodic elections.
	5 e	We undertake to strengthen our electoral systems by ensuring independence of electoral bodies, monitoring electoral campaigns and processes by independent experts, and transparency of campaign contributions.
	5 f	We will endeavour to continue the consolidation of democratic multiparty systems in our societies to increase participation and representation of the people.
	5 g	We are committed to creating favourable conditions including a strong legal framework for the development of political parties and their engagement in political developments, elections, and responding to the interests of society.

	5 h	We will build mechanisms to give people better access to their members of parliament.
	5 i	We will take all possible measures to legislate only after proper consultations.
	5 j	We will endeavour to strengthen democracy at the local level.
	5 k	We will take measures to broaden electoral participation to encompass all sectors of our respective societies, particularly our citizens living abroad or overseas.
6	An inclusive and participatory society addresses the interests and concerns of people belonging to ethnic and other minorities.	
	6 a	We undertake to keep an open dialogue with people belonging to minority groups to improve their situation.
	6 b	We undertake to ensure people belonging to minorities are well and truly represented in all the national institutions, and where this is not possible, to be regularly consulted.
7	An inclusive and participatory society values and implements compromise and accommodation as they facilitate the resolution of societal conflicts and promote stability of democracies.	
	7 a	We commend achievements of democracy through compromise and accommodation as a universal means to mitigate conflicts, promote stability, and harness the creative energies of the people for common causes.
8	An inclusive and participatory society needs to foster national belongingness for all members and groups in society.	
	8 a	We will endeavour to promote national unity and identity within all groups of society.
9	An inclusive and participatory society encourages education on democratic values and informs its members on their democratic rights and freedoms, as part of their efforts in consolidating their democracy.	
	9 a	We will endeavour to initiate or facilitate the development of national education programmes, or to encourage the appropriate authorities to do so, to improve knowledge of basic democratic values and human rights.

III. A democratic society promotes and protects the rights and freedoms of all its members.		
10	A democratic society promotes and protects the rights and freedoms of all its members providing instruments of redress for cases of breach of rights and abuse of power.	
	10 a	We undertake to set up and strengthen national institutions and mechanisms to ensure that basic democratic principles and human rights are fully respected and guaranteed.
	10 b	We undertake to bring to justice, within existing national legal frameworks, any person, irrespective of status or position, who commits a breach of human rights or abuse of power.
11	A democratic society that promotes and protects the rights and freedoms of all its members protects those who work towards ensuring that such rights and freedoms are fully respected.	
	11 a	We undertake to secure an environment conducive to the activities of Human Rights defenders in line with existing Human Rights instruments.
12	A democratic society protects vulnerable people.	
	12 a	We undertake to address issues related to protection of children, women, the aged, and people with disabilities from abuse, especially during armed conflict.
	12 b	We undertake to address issues related to the empowerment of women and youth.
	12 c	We undertake to address issues related to the empowerment of children, the aged and people with disabilities.
IV. A democratic society is an open and transparent society.		
13	An open and transparent society encourages the free creation, pursuit and flow of information.	
	13 a	We undertake to make any legal reforms necessary to ensure the freedom of all types of media – print, broadcast and Internet.
	13 b	We undertake to ensure that, while guaranteeing media freedom, we protect individuals, organisations and institutions from abuse.
	13 c	We undertake to give all people access to new information technologies.

14	An open and transparent society elicits the effective participation of civil society in local, national and international institutions and processes.	
	14 a	We undertake to engage in regular and active dialogue and consultation with civil society organisations as our partners in our democratic development.
	14 b	We undertake to provide legislative and regulatory framework and foster an enabling environment for civil society organisations to develop. We shall promote partnerships between civil society and government. To that end we undertake to involve broadly civil society in decision making processes at local and national levels.
	14 c	We undertake to serve our citizens by providing more information on government policies and programmes, and by considering the benefit of access to information legislation and systems, if not already in place.
V. A democratic society functions under agreed rules of law and accountability regardless of the challenges it may face.		
15	A society that functions under agreed rules of law and accountability condemns all types terrorism as a crime and a threat to peace and security at both national and international level, and democratic governance.	
	15 a	We undertake to ensure that, while fighting terrorism, we will work to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms as they are guaranteed by international and national legal instruments. We undertake to ensure due process to those who are charged with terrorism. We support the efforts being made by the international community under the auspices of the United Nations to address the issues of terrorism, and express the hope that the process will be accelerated.
	15 b	In the framework of our struggle against terrorism we undertake to promote democracy, human rights, good governance, development, and the rule of law as important in creating just, equitable, stable and secure societies.
	15 c	In the framework of our struggle against terrorism we undertake to work together to strengthen international law in order to enhance the fight against all types of terrorism and ensure a peaceful resolution of international and national conflicts.
	15 e	We undertake to create and integrate, where necessary, mechanisms of conflict prevention and consensus-building in our societies.
16	A society that functions under agreed rules of law and accountability cannot tolerate violent and/or military insurgencies against a democratically elected government.	

	16 a	We undertake to provide civilian control over military, paramilitary and police forces to ensure they protect democracy and constitutionality and through their actions do not undermine democratically elected regimes.
	16 b	We undertake to deal with insurgents against democratically elected governments in a lawful and constitutional manner.
17	A society that functions under agreed rules of law and accountability cannot tolerate abuse of power and corruption. These elements undermine democracy as they erode the people's trust in democratic governance.	
	17 a	We undertake to promptly address any challenges to the separation of powers.
	17 b	We undertake to strengthen the safeguards for ensuring independence, impartiality and professionalism of the judiciary.
	17 c	We undertake to adjust, reform or reinvigorate systems and procedures to eliminate corruption and introduce accountability measures when trust is breached.
	17 d	We undertake to encourage the investigation of allegations of abuse of power and corruption.
VI. Democratic societies show solidarity toward others.		
18	Encourage and assist other states in making the often difficult transition to democracy.	
	18 a	Share experiences, lessons and best practices on the adoption of democracy and democratic institution building.
	18 b	Support multilateral organisations in their efforts to promote and strengthen democracy.
19	We take note of the outcome of the Seoul Conference of the Community of Democracies, held in November 2002 and encourage the two fora to work closely together in the pursuit of the common goal of developing and deepening democracy throughout the world.	
20	We believe that democratic societies are better able to achieve the Millennium Development Goals as they are inherently and fundamentally participatory and representative. The more affluent democratic states need to assist new and restored democracies in meeting their development goals for the benefit of all people living in democratised developing countries as this ensures stability and thus the success of the democratisation process.	
	20 a	Assist new and restored democracies achieve their Millennium Development Goals.
	20 b	Assist new and restored democracies in realising commitments undertaken in regional and international fora.

21	We express our appreciation and gratitude to the governments of the Philippines, Nicaragua, Romania, Benin and Mongolia, as well as to the United Nations and individual donor countries, for having made the five International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies possible. We call upon the United Nations General Assembly and upon its member states to examine the possibility of providing further support to the ICNRD conferences, organised in cooperation with the United Nations.
22	The participants have expressed their deep gratitude and high appreciation to the people and the Government of Mongolia for successfully holding the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies. They have recognized that after thirteen years of the peaceful transition to a democracy and market economy Mongolia has made significant progress in promoting and consolidating democratic values.

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 12 September 2003.

**Annex II to the letter dated 18 September 2003 from the
Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General**

(FINAL)

**Ulaanbaatar Plan of Action
Democracy, Good Governance and Civil Society**

12 September 2003

1. We, the governments and representatives of nations around the world gathered at the 5th International Conference of New or Restored Democracies in Ulaanbaatar on 10-12 September 2003, affirm the need to further work towards consolidation of democracy in our countries by building societies that are just and responsible, inclusive and participatory, open and transparent, that respect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all and ensure accountability and the rule of law.

2. The Plan of Action of the Fifth ICNRD, which is to be presented to the United Nations General Assembly, will guide the work of the President and the Bureau in the years leading to the sixth ICNRD.

3. National Action

3.1 For democratic changes to be meaningful and of benefit to all people, these need to be reflected at the national level. Countries may therefore:

3.1 a Draw up, with the collaboration of citizens and civil society, a national plan for strengthening democracy which is consistent with the spirit of the Declaration agreed at Ulaanbaatar.

3.1 b Prior to the sixth ICNRD, prepare 'country information notes'. The country information notes will outline the prospects of advancing and deepening democracy in the country and the steps that have or still need to be taken to address the principles and recommendations of the ICNRD declaration.

3.1 c Develop their own national democratic indicators' databases to be better able to monitor their progress in democratic and social development over time. It is recommended that the development of own national democratic indicators benefit from the current work done in other multilateral fora. The creation of such a database should be an inclusive and dynamic process with the participation of policy-makers, academics and civil society. The exercise will raise public awareness on issues of democratic governance and provide a broad overview of progress in this area. This process could also be central to national consensus building with the engagement of all stakeholders leading to further national consolidation of democracy.

3.1 d Give special attention to the following areas:

3.2 Participation and representation

3.2 a Ensure that the electoral process guarantees principles of holding free, fair, and periodic elections, based on secret balloting and universal suffrage monitored by independent national election authorities;

3.2 b Emphasise voter education particularly in an effort to improve voter turnout and reduce invalid votes. Ensure that voters have access to independent and sufficient information;

3.2 c Ensure independence of electoral bodies and ensure their constitutional guarantees;

3.2 d Ensure transparent electoral campaign financing;

3.2 e Ensure the freedom of association including the right to form independent political parties to create a pluralistic society;

3.2 f Support the participation of citizens living abroad or overseas and ensure that the election and decision-making process benefits from the largest possible rate of participation within society.

3.2 g Decentralise decision making to the local level, where feasible;

3.2 h Improve democratic institutions at the local level;

3.2 i As appropriate, take immediate steps in publishing all legislation (even financial ones) as white papers and consider inviting comments from citizens and interested parties before these are enacted;

3.2 j Improve the work of parliamentary committees; and

3.2 k The executive and legislature should hold regular consultations with citizens to ensure they are well aware of their needs and thus are able to address them accordingly at the highest levels.

3.3 Sustainable Development and eradication of poverty

3.3 a Develop safety nets, including social welfare systems, for the poor and marginalised in our societies;

3.3 b Ensure provision of essential services are affordable for the poorest;

3.3 c Address the urban/rural divide by developing plans that address the needs of rural communities;

3.3 d Promote Human Resource Development for achievement of national economic development goals, especially with a view to the unemployed pursuing a productive life in our communities;

3.3 e Promote public participation in environmental decision making;

3.3 f Prioritize the protection of the environment as this has a direct link to the alleviation of poverty;

3.3 g Aggressively pursue the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

3.4 Protection of human rights

3.4 a Establish or strengthen independent and impartial human rights commissions in conformity with the Paris Principles, ombudsman offices or similar bodies able to investigate human rights abuses and abuse of power;

3.4 b Harmonize national legislation with international instruments on the promotion and protection of human rights;

3.4 c Consider acceding to all the international human rights instruments, regularly prepare reports on their implementation and submit them for consideration by the appropriate treaty mechanisms and actively cooperate with the United Nations Commission of Human Rights;

3.4 d Support human rights monitoring capacities of NGOs and the media;

3.4 e Develop human rights education programmes for the military, the police, the civil service, as well as the general population. Countries should consider including civic/ democracy/ human rights education in their school curricula, or encourage the appropriate authorities to do so, and if necessary, seek the help of the United Nations System and civil society;

3.4 f Promote and protect equality of all citizens before the law and equal protection under the law;

3.4 g Ensure right of equal access to justice and to be protected from arbitrary arrest;

3.4 h Investigate alternative dispute settlement mechanisms;

3.4 i Set up, where absent, independent bar/law associations;

3.4 j Strengthen the independence, impartiality and professionalism of the judiciary;

3.4 k Ensure due process of law and the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law;

3.4 l Ensure guaranteed right to a fair and impartial trial;

3.4 m Ensure that violations of human rights and abuse of power are well investigated and perpetrators brought to justice;

3.4 n Ensure remedies are provided to victims of human rights violations; and

3.4 o Protect the freedoms of those who work for the protection of human rights.

3.5 Open and transparent Government

3.5 a Facilitate citizens' access to information;

3.5 b Make internal and transnational activities and transactions, that are most susceptible to corrupt practices, more transparent and easily accessible for investigation;

3.5 c Provide media education to national officials and civil servants to increase appreciation of the media's role in a democratic society;

3.5 d Facilitate access to government records and other information, within our national legal frameworks, while protecting individuals, organizations and institutions from abuse;

3.5 e Reform any legal instruments that inhibit the media from pursuing their work; and

3.5 f Support programs aimed at improving the professionalism and ethics of journalists in the country and encourage the formation of professional associations of media practitioners.

3.6 Rule of Law and Accountability

3.6 a Ensure that the military remains accountable to the democratically elected civilian government;

3.6 b Strengthen, where necessary, the separation of powers;

3.6 c Strengthen legal basis of fight against corruption, including speedy negotiation and adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption;

3.6 d Become parties to the appropriate UN conventions and protocols to fight international terrorism and promote speediest conclusion to the negotiations on the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism;

3.6 e Cooperate fully with the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) of the United Nations Security Council to fight terrorism and other international mechanisms to fight transnational crime;

3.6 f Incorporate in legislation and support provisions in international agreements concerning protection of human rights when fighting terrorism;

3.6 g Ensure due process to those who are charged with terrorism, as reflected in international legal documents;

3.6 h Make greater use of the United Nations' and regional mechanisms of peaceful settlement of disputes;

3.6 i Consider recourse to the services of the International Court of Justice and other international and regional dispute settlement institutions; and

3.6 j Incorporate provisions concerning mechanisms of conflict prevention and consensus building in legislation.

4. Regional Action

Strengthening regional collaboration in democratic development by:

4.1 Drawing up a plan of action for the regions through regional inter-governmental organisations with the collaboration of governments and civil society.

4.2 Adopt regional declarations or charters that are more catered to the conditions in the regions and that focus on regional collaboration for the promotion and support of democracy.

4.3 Map out the relationship between the regional organisations and ICNRD and procedures that need to be followed for collaborative efforts.

4.4 Undertake a series of activities to exchange experiences on coping with political, economic and social challenges of globalization and its impact on democratic governance; social responsibility in a globalizing world; rural and urban development and local participation and

representation; participation and representation in the design and implementation of environmental and development programs; policy and capacity development required to achieve the MDGs.

4.5 Agree on modes of mutual assistance in the development of democratic institutions; share experiences in the development of a democratic culture; and develop programmes of assistance for countries undergoing democratic transitions;

4.6 Organise regular regional events within the framework of regional organisations or fora to assess progress of countries in the region in their democratic endeavours;

4.7 Undertake a series of regional meetings and workshops with the participation of academia and civil society to discuss the need for governance and democracy assessments, exchange views on assessment methodologies and identify examples of good practice or innovative problem-solving in this area.

4.8 Create regional networks of policy-makers and civil society members to study conflict prevention and consensus-building in democracies and identify successful experiences to share with regional partners.

4.9 Undertake to set up regional networks of practitioners and stakeholders to promote democracy education curricula and share experiences in this area.

4.10 Promote regional dialogue on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and create or consolidate regional monitoring mechanisms to assess the state of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

4.11 Promote regional dialogue to share experiences on strengthening electoral and political party systems.

4.12 Use information technology tools to create databases of regional treaties, agreements and declarations, and to share resources and experiences in democratic governance.

4.13 Promote development of international cooperation, particularly at the regional level, against corruption.

5. International Action

Recalling with appreciation the United Nations Secretary-General's Report (A/56/499, 23 October 2001) the Fifth ICNRD recommends that the United Nations General Assembly supports the following plan in promoting and supporting democracy:

5.1 Strengthen the Follow-up Mechanism by ensuring that:

5.1 a It is responsible for the follow-up on the implementation of this Plan of Action;

5.1 b The President or Bureau represent ICNRD at international fora when deemed necessary;

5.1 c The President of the Fifth ICNRD establishes, with the assistance of the United Nations, a working group to examine the conclusions of the Fifth Conference and proposals made in background papers submitted to

and interventions made at the Fifth Conference with the aim of studying proposals for making the Conference even more effective and efficient and establishing a practical programme of work for future conferences;

5.1 d It coordinates with the International Civil Society Forum follow-up mechanism; and

5.1 e The President or the Bureau are urged to initiate discussions with the Chair of the Community of Democracies to exchange views on ways of bringing closer the two movements, in a complimentary manner.



General Assembly

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Fifty-eighth session

Agenda item 91 (f)

Macroeconomic policy questions: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report is being submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/242 of 20 December 2002, in which the Secretary-General of the United Nations was requested to submit a report on the outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation. The report reviews the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, and the Almaty Declaration (see A/CONF.202/3, annexes I and II). The report also highlights relevant aspects of the preparatory process that preceded the International Ministerial Conference.

* The document was submitted late to the conferences services without the explanation required under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 53/208 B, by which the Assembly decided that, if a report is submitted late, the reason should be included in a footnote to the document.



I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/242 of 20 December 2002, the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation was held in Almaty on 28 and 29 August 2003. The second session of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee was held prior to the Conference from 25 to 28 August 2003.
2. In paragraph 5 of resolution 57/242, the General Assembly designated the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States as the Secretary-General of the Conference and requested him to organize all of the sessions of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee.
3. In that same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the outcome of the Conference to it at its fifty-eighth session. The present report has been prepared in response to that request. Section II provides an assessment of the outcome of the Conference, and section III contains an account of the preparatory process leading up to the Conference.
4. The report of the International Ministerial Conference as adopted at 29 August 2003 is contained in document A/CONF.202/3.

II. Outcome of the International Ministerial Conference

5. The International Ministerial Conference was the first high-level event of the United Nations devoted to the special needs and problems of landlocked developing countries in order to integrate them effectively into the world economy by establishing efficient transit transport systems in both landlocked and transit developing countries. The Conference was attended by representatives from 82 States Members of the United Nations, with many delegations at the Ministerial level, one observer delegation and 24 international organizations. The global high-level conference convened by the General Assembly was organized in the most cost-effective manner, with a positive outcome resulting from the full collaborative involvement of Member States and United Nations entities. Host country cooperation and full support also contributed to its success. The Conference reviewed the transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries and unanimously adopted the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation between Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries.¹ In the Almaty Programme of Action it was agreed to undertake specific actions in five priority areas, namely: fundamental transit policy issues; infrastructure development and maintenance; international trade and trade facilitation; international support measures; and implementation and review.
6. The outcome of the International Ministerial Conference was expected to galvanize international recognition and support for the efforts to develop a win-win solution for both landlocked and transit developing countries with the support of their development partners.

7. The Almaty Declaration² and Programme of Action reflect the continued and strong commitment of the international community to addressing the special needs and problems of landlocked developing countries as called for in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.³ The overarching goal of the Almaty Programme of Action is to forge partnerships to overcome the specific problems of the landlocked developing countries that result from their lack of territorial access to the sea and their remoteness and isolation from world markets. That situation has contributed to their relative poverty, substantially inflating transportation costs and lowering their effective participation in international trade.

8. The objective of the Almaty Programme of Action is to establish a new global framework for developing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries, taking into account the interests of both landlocked and transit developing countries. The Programme aims to (a) secure access to and from the sea by all means of transport; (b) reduce costs and improve services so as to increase the competitiveness of their exports; (c) reduce the delivered costs of imports; (d) address problems of delays and uncertainties in trade routes; (e) develop adequate national networks; (f) reduce loss, damage and deterioration en route; (g) open the way for export expansion; and (h) improve the safety of road transport and the security of people along the corridors.

9. The main innovative feature of the Almaty Programme of Action is the focus on action-oriented specific measures to be undertaken by both landlocked and transit developing countries with the support of their development partners, the implementation of which would be measurable and feasible. The actions agreed upon at the International Ministerial Conference in the five priority areas, if fully and effectively implemented, would facilitate establishing the efficient transit transport systems that are inevitably required for landlocked developing countries to be effectively integrated into the international trading system.

10. Three parallel events were organized during the Conference to complement the Conference objectives: a round table on trade facilitation measures, a high-level investment forum and a round table on regional initiatives on trade and transport facilitation. Those events were organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Bank and the Economic Commission for Europe respectively. The events identified specific initiatives and actions that could be translated into the development of new, innovative and strengthened partnerships between official development partners and the private sector, and the opening up of new international partnerships for assisting landlocked and transit developing countries through the establishment of efficient transit transport systems.

A. Almaty Declaration

11. On 29 August 2003, the International Ministerial Conference expressed its political commitment through the adoption of the Almaty Declaration. The Almaty Declaration recalled the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which heads of States and Governments recognized the special needs and problems of the landlocked developing countries and urged both bilateral and multilateral donors to increase financial and technical assistance to that group of countries to meet their special development needs and to help them overcome the impediments of

geography by improving their transit transport systems.⁴ The Almaty Declaration recognized high trade transaction costs as a major reason for the marginalization of landlocked developing countries within the global trading system. Trade and transport are inextricably linked. Transport costs are a key determinant of international trade competitiveness. The Ministers committed to work towards minimizing the current marginalization and enhancing the beneficial integration of landlocked developing countries into the global economy. To that end, the Ministers committed to strive to establish efficient transit transport systems in both landlocked and transit developing countries.

12. The Ministers reaffirmed the right of access of landlocked countries to and from the sea and freedom of transit through the territory of transit countries by all means of transport, in accordance with applicable rules of international law. At the same time they reaffirmed that transit countries, in the exercise of their full sovereignty over their territory, have the right to take all measures necessary to ensure that the rights and facilities provided for landlocked developing countries in no way infringe upon their legitimate interests.

13. The Almaty Declaration recognized that excessive transport costs create a major effective barrier to foreign markets. In this regard, the Declaration noted the request of landlocked developing countries that the current negotiations on market access for agricultural and non-agricultural goods should in particular focus on products of special interest to landlocked developing countries.

B. Almaty Programme of Action

14. The Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation between Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries concerns five priority areas, which are explained below.

1. Fundamental transit policy issues

15. The Almaty Programme of Action states that it is important for landlocked and transit developing countries to review and revise their transit transport regulatory frameworks and allow greater participation of the private sector. The landlocked and transit developing countries should make transport services responsive to user demands and increase the transparency of transit and border regulations. Those countries should promote the use of information technology and strengthen training programmes. Transport strategies and programmes need to take full account of environmental aspects and ensure sustainable development. All those actions should be an integral part of a policy reform programme and poverty reduction strategy.

16. International conventions on transport and transit, as well as regional and bilateral agreements, are the main vehicles by which the harmonization, simplification and standardization of rules and documentation can be achieved. To accomplish those ends, the Almaty Programme of Action calls on development partners to give high priority to sustainable transportation financing, including through public/private partnerships involving official development assistance and through private investments including foreign direct investments.

17. The Almaty Programme of Action highlights specific actions required for an integrated approach to trade and transport sector development, including modernizing existing facilities and eliminating non-physical barriers to transit transport. The role of the regional and subregional organizations needed to be strengthened with the assistance of the international community. In addition, the institutional mechanisms to monitor the implementation of agreements between landlocked and transit developing countries should be strengthened.

2. Infrastructure development and maintenance

18. The Almaty Programme of Action recognized that inadequate infrastructure was a major obstacle to establishing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries. Communication facilities are required to facilitate advance knowledge of transport service availabilities and to ensure smooth and speedy transit. Addressing those needs will involve considerable investment, capacity-building, new policies and institutional reform. The share of national resources and official development assistance allocated to infrastructure development in landlocked developing countries is very limited. A prerequisite for successfully attracting private investment and infrastructure projects is a sound regulatory and institutional framework. Regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration could help to overcome problems of market size, especially in landlocked developing countries, and attract the private sector to invest in infrastructure development.

19. Specific actions required in the area of infrastructure development and maintenance relate to the need for a greater share of public investment to be allocated for the development of infrastructure through financial assistance and investment from donors, international financial institutions and development assistance agencies. Landlocked and transit developing countries should make every effort to provide an environment conducive to using all transport modes and transit transport services to encourage competition. At the same time, capacities and legal regimes for multimodal transport operations need to be further developed, with particular attention given to constructing "missing links". Private sector participation should be encouraged by development partners in transit transport infrastructure development through co-financing, Build-Operate-Transfer and playing a catalytic role in attracting foreign direct investment as well as in facilitating increased access to bond markets. In addition, private-public partnership platforms along trade and transport corridors should be promoted through the development and extensive use of common information and communication technology-based management and monitoring systems.

20. The Almaty Programme of Action further identified specific actions needed to develop infrastructure in all modes of transport, including rail, road, air transport, ports, inland waterways, pipelines and communications.

3. International trade and trade facilitation

21. The Almaty Programme of Action recognized that the main cause for the marginalization of landlocked developing countries in the international trading system was the high trade transaction costs. Trade and transport are inextricably linked. Transport is a key sector for international trade, for regional integration and for ensuring balanced national development. Excessive transport costs create a

major barrier to foreign markets. Important sources of additional and avoidable costs and inefficiency included cumbersome border-crossing, customs procedures and documentation requirements and inadequate infrastructure facilities, as well as costly bank transactions. Landlocked developing countries depend on the state of their own and their transit neighbours' border procedures and level of bilateral cooperation as well as regional cooperation or integration. In this context, note was taken of the request of landlocked developing countries that the current negotiations on market access for agricultural and non-agricultural goods should consider giving particular attention to products of special interest to landlocked developing countries.

22. The Almaty Programme of Action identified specific actions to promote international trade and trade facilitation. Those included the accelerated accession of landlocked and transit developing countries to the World Trade Organization, taking into account their special needs and problems. Development partners should provide assistance in this regard. Pursuant to the Monterrey Consensus⁵ and Doha Ministerial Declaration,⁶ current negotiations should give full attention to the needs and interests of developing countries, including landlocked and transit developing countries.

4. International support measures

23. The Almaty Programme of Action recognized that the cost implications of meeting the requirements to establish and maintain an efficient transit transport system were often of such magnitude that the landlocked and transit developing countries could not by themselves accomplish this formidable task. Many landlocked developing countries are among the poorest countries, and most of the transit countries are themselves developing countries with limited resources. The development partners should play an important role in supporting transit transport development programmes. Such support should take full account of the special vulnerabilities and development needs of landlocked and transit developing countries in providing assistance to them.

24. The Almaty Programme of Action highlighted the specific actions that needed to be undertaken in the area of international support measures by the international community, including financial and development institutions and donor countries. Those entities should assist landlocked and transit developing countries in dealing effectively with their transit problems through a supportive external environment that gives access to and encourages the transfer of technologies related to transit transport systems. They should increase official development assistance, design innovative modalities for financing and encourage increased foreign direct investment for transit transport infrastructure. Donor countries and multilateral financial and development institutions should be encouraged to continue their efforts to ensure effective implementation of the commitments reached in the Monterrey Consensus.

25. Further, the Programme of Action identified priority areas for financial and technical assistance, which include "missing links" in transit transport corridors, alternative cost-effective routes, dry port projects, adjacent border points, rehabilitation of transport infrastructure and promotion of the implementation of agreed measures. Priority areas for technical cooperation include promoting the implementation of bilateral, subregional, regional and international transit

agreements; promoting social and market-oriented transit transport policies; and implementing privatization programmes. The promotion of customs training programmes is also required, along with the expansion of regional databases on road transport.

5. Implementation and review

26. The Almaty Programme of Action emphasized that success in attaining its objectives would depend critically on the effective functioning of the arrangements for its implementation and review at subregional, regional and global levels. Bilateral, subregional and regional cooperation is the most important element in establishing efficient transit transport systems and must be promoted on the basis of the mutual interests of both landlocked and transit developing countries. Arrangements must be established and further strengthened for regular review and monitoring of the implementation of transit agreements through public and private sector dialogue and consultations. The private sector should be actively involved in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. The Programme of Action acknowledged the need for concerted efforts by the landlocked and transit developing countries, their development partners, the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, relevant international organizations such as the World Bank, regional development banks, the World Trade Organization and the World Customs Organization.

27. Special subregional meetings should be organized, where appropriate, to consider how to implement effectively the Almaty Programme of Action. In accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly, where applicable, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the World Bank, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the regional commissions and other relevant international, regional and subregional organizations are invited, as appropriate, to provide support to landlocked and transit developing countries in organizing such subregional meetings.

28. The United Nations General Assembly is invited to consider conducting a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action at a time to be decided upon, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/270 B. The Office of the High Representative should coordinate the preparatory process for the review. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Bank and the regional commissions are invited to provide substantive and technical assistance for that process. The Office of the High Representative is called upon to further enhance its cooperation and coordination with organizations within the United Nations system, particularly those engaged in operational activities on the ground in landlocked and transit developing countries, to ensure the effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and to continue to carry out its advocacy work to mobilize awareness and focus attention on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

III. The preparatory process for the Conference

29. The organization of the Conference was unique in itself. In addition to the intergovernmental process focusing on the formulation of the Almaty Programme of

Action, particular attention was given to the regional level process of assessing the transit transport systems in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and of adopting a regional platform/programme of action on measures aimed at establishing efficient transit transport systems at the subregional and regional levels.

30. The Latin American regional preparatory meeting, which was hosted by the Government of Paraguay from 12 to 13 March 2003 in Asuncion, adopted the Asuncion Programme of Action on transit transport cooperation in Latin America. In lieu of the regional intergovernmental preparatory meeting, the first phase of the fifty-ninth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on 25 April 2003 in Bangkok adopted the Asian action plan on transit transport cooperation. The African regional meeting was also held from 5 to 7 May 2003 at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, which adopted the African action plan on transit transport cooperation. The Almaty Programme of Action took note of the regional plans of action.

31. A broad-based participatory approach was the main strategy for the preparatory process of the International Ministerial Conference. With its global mandate of United Nations system-wide coordination, advocacy and mobilization of international support measures, the Office of the High Representative undertook the necessary steps to ensure the active participation of the relevant United Nations entities and international organizations in the preparatory process. Those organizations designated focal points to facilitate the preparations for the International Ministerial Conference.

32. The World Bank was actively involved in the substantive preparations for the International Ministerial Conference. The World Bank included the preparations for the International Ministerial Conference in the agenda of its Transport Forum 2003. The 2002 annual report of the World Bank, entitled *Global Economic Prospects: Making Trade Work for the World's Poor*, also provided a comprehensive analysis of the role of transport services for development, including the specific difficulties confronted by landlocked developing countries. The World Bank organized a parallel event, the high-level investment forum, during the Conference (see para. 10 of the present report).

33. The UNCTAD secretariat was also actively involved in the preparatory process for the International Ministerial Conference. In particular, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development commissioned a number of case studies on transit transport systems in South East Asia, Central Asia, Latin America, and Western and Eastern Africa. The UNCTAD secretariat organized the parallel event on trade facilitation measures during the Conference.

34. The regional commissions played a lead role in providing substantive preparations for the subregional and regional preparatory meetings. The Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean prepared assessments on regional transit transport systems and on measures for further development. The secretariat of the Economic Commission for Europe organized the parallel event on the regional initiatives on trade and transport facilitation.

35. In response to the General Assembly's request to seek voluntary contributions to facilitate preparations for the International Ministerial Conference, the Secretary-

General established a trust fund for the preparation of the International Ministerial Conference and for its follow-up activities in order to pool voluntary contributions. The Governments of Greece, Italy, Japan and Switzerland as well as the European Commission and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) made a contribution to the trust fund for the International Ministerial Conference. The Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries of the United Nations Development Programme made also contributions to the trust fund. The Government of Italy provided financial assistance to UNCTAD in preparing technical papers on transit transport systems in different landlocked subregions.

36. As the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to launch a public information campaign, the Secretary-General of the Conference, with the support of the Department of Public Information, carried out a public information campaign. Those measures have been effective in drawing international attention to the objectives of the Conference.

IV. Conclusion

37. The International Ministerial Conference successfully galvanized international solidarity and partnerships to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries as called for in the Millennium Declaration. The full and effective implementation of the specific actions in the five priority areas agreed upon in the Almaty Programme of Action would facilitate establishing the efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries that are inevitably required for landlocked developing countries to be effectively integrated into the international trading system.

Notes

¹ A/CONF.202/3, annex I.

² A/CONF.202/3, annex II.

³ General Assembly resolution 55/2.

⁴ General Assembly resolution 55/2, para. 18.

⁵ *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution I, annex.

⁶ A/C.2/56/7, annex.

**General Assembly**

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Fifty-eighth session
Agenda item 129
Joint Inspection Unit

Joint Inspection Unit**Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) entitled "Managing information in the United Nations system organizations: management information systems" (A/58/82) and the comments of the Secretary-General and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) thereon (A/58/82/Add.1), on the management audit review of outsourcing in the United Nations and United Nations funds and programmes (A/58/92) and the comments of the Secretary-General thereon (A/58/92/Add.1) and on the common and joint services of the United Nations system organizations at Vienna (A/58/258) and the comments of the Secretary-General and CEB thereon (A/58/258/Add.1). During its consideration of the reports, the Committee met with members of JIU, who provided additional information and clarification.

2. The Committee agrees with CEB that the report of JIU on management information systems (A/58/82) provides a good overview and inventory of the experience in management systems in the United Nations system and a good baseline for an understanding of the great variety of experiences across the system reflecting the different requirements of the organizations as well as their different levels of experience and the maturity of their information technology systems (A/58/82/Add.1, para. 2). A number of the points made in the report of JIU have been covered by the Committee in some detail in chapter I of its report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (A/58/7), as well as in its other reports on information and communications technology strategy.

3. The Committee expresses its appreciation for the detailed tables provided in the annex to the report, which contain information on the various systems used by the United Nations system organizations. The Committee points to the continuing need for a technical analysis of the various systems that would enable decision makers to obtain an understanding of the relative costs and benefits. It is also



important for the organizations to provide a time frame for the completion of information technology projects.

4. The Committee requested a clarification of the CEB response to recommendation 2 (A/58/82/Add.1, paras. 8 and 9). The Committee was informed that CEB members felt that the Chief Information Officer should be able to interpret the substantive guidance and policy advice emanating from legislative bodies (for implementation) in accordance with the particular operational requirements of the concerned organization. The Committee wishes to point out that while from time to time legislative bodies may provide guidance, their primary role is to set policy rather than advise on it.

5. The report of JIU on management audit review of outsourcing (A/58/92) covers the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations funds and programmes. The Committee concurs with the comments made by the Secretary-General on the report (A/58/92/Add.1), and notes paragraph 4 of the comments by the Secretary-General, in which he expresses general support for the findings and recommendations contained in the report of JIU, but emphasizes the need for flexibility and due consideration to the unique environments in which individual organizations operate. The Committee agrees that the recommendations may be seen "more as guidelines than as prescriptions for action".

6. The Committee also concurs with the Secretary-General's comment that, contrary to the suggestion of JIU (A/58/92, para. 76), as long as a supplier continues to offer the most efficient and cost-effective service and is selected through a fair, transparent and competitive process conducted at regular intervals that takes into account vendor performance evaluation, it is in the interest of the Organization to continue to use that supplier. The Committee notes that the Administration is therefore unable to support the suggestion that the same supplier should not be used for more than 10 years (see A/58/92/Add.1, para. 9).

7. The Advisory Committee further concurs with the Secretary-General in his response to the recommendation that the Inter-Agency Procurement Working Group should aim to standardize and generalize the application of due diligence procedures within the United Nations system, using relevant provisions of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supply manual as a model (see A/58/92/Add.1, paras. 19-22). While the Secretary-General questions the relevance of the recommendation vis-à-vis the objective of the JIU report, he acknowledges that common procedures or standards for due diligence would be useful. However, with a roster of nearly 6,000 approved suppliers and approximately 500 requests monthly from new suppliers wishing to register, a re-evaluation of suppliers every two years, as is the policy in UNICEF, would require greater resources than the Procurement Division of the United Nations Secretariat has at its disposal.

8. The matters dealt with in the report of JIU on common and joint services of the United Nations system organizations at Vienna (A/58/258) are of continuing concern to the Committee. It will revert to the report in the context of its future consideration of the issue.

9. **The Committee recommends that the General Assembly consider the reports of JIU in the light of its comments provided above.**



**General Assembly
Security Council**

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General Assembly
Fifty-eighth session
Agenda items 44, 100 and 156

Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

Culture of peace

Globalization and interdependence

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

**Letter dated 24 September 2003 from the Permanent
Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the declaration adopted by the participants of the First Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, which was held in Astana, Kazakhstan, on 23 and 24 September 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 44, 100 and 156, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yerzhan Kh. **Kzykhanov**



Annex to the letter dated 24 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and Russian]

Declaration of the participants at the First Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions

We, the participants at the First Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, held on 23 and 24 September 2003 in Astana, the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan,

Recognizing the right of each human person to freely be convinced, choose, express and practise his/her religion,

Considering inter-religious dialogue as one of the most important instruments for ensuring peace and harmony among peoples and nations,

Supporting the efforts of the United Nations, other relevant international and regional organizations, as well as Governments, civil societies and non-governmental organizations in the promotion of dialogue among civilizations,

Confirming the importance of religion for the well-being of all mankind,

Condemning the misrepresentation of religions and the incorrect use of differences among religions as a means for achieving selfish, disruptive and violent goals,

Conscious of

The declining sense of respect for the sanctity of human life and the dignity of every human person,

The serious challenges posed to global stability by poverty, hunger, illiteracy, disease, immorality and lack of access to clean water and health care,

The recourse to oppression, cruelty and violence as the principal instruments for resolving disputes,

The ecological crisis in which the world finds itself, with grave consequences for present and future generations,

Declare:

That the promotion of the values of tolerance, truth, justice and love must be the aim of any religious teaching,

That extremism, terrorism and other forms of violence in the name of religion have nothing to do with genuine understanding of religion, but are threats to human life and hence should be rejected,

May our commitments be blessed and all the peoples of the world be granted justice, peace and prosperity.

That the diversity of religious beliefs and practices should not lead to mutual suspicion, discrimination and humiliation, but to a mutual acceptance and harmony, demonstrating distinctive characteristics of each religion and culture,

That religions must aspire towards greater cooperation, recognizing tolerance and mutual acceptance as essential instruments in the peaceful coexistence of all peoples,

That educational programmes and the means of social communication should be essential instruments for promotion of positive attitudes towards religions and cultures,

That inter-religious dialogue is one of the key means for social development and the promotion of the well-being of all peoples, fostering tolerance, mutual understanding and harmony among different cultures and religions, and operating to bring an end to conflicts and violence,

That the entire human family must be encouraged to overcome hatred, enmity, intolerance and xenophobia,

We shall strengthen cooperation in promoting spiritual values and the culture of dialogue with the aim of ensuring peace in the new millennium,

We are prepared to make every effort not to allow the use of religious differences as an instrument of hatred and discord, in order to save mankind from a global conflict of religions and cultures,

We look forward to joint actions to ensure peace and progress for humanity and to foster the stability of societies as the basis for a harmonious world for the future,

We thank the Republic of Kazakhstan and His Excellency President Nursultan Nazarbayev for initiating and hosting this Congress,

May our commitments be blessed and all the peoples of the world be granted justice, peace and prosperity.

Resolutions of the First Congress of World and Traditional National Religions

The participants of the First Congress of World and Traditional National Religions, held on 23 and 24 September 2003 in Astana, the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan,

Taking into consideration the fruitful exchange of views on the role of religions in promoting peace and harmony in the world,

Expressing common understanding of the need to continue the constructive dialogue among representatives of the world's religions,

Have resolved:

- To convene the Congress at least once every three years;
- To approve the following title of the Congress — "Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions";
- To request the Republic of Kazakhstan as the initiator of the Congress, to elaborate all aspects related to the establishment of the Secretariat;
- To convene the Second Congress in Astana, the Republic of Kazakhstan.



General Assembly

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Fifty-eighth session

Agenda item 9

General debate

Letter dated 24 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the written statement of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by Jacques Chirac, President of France, and Silvio Berlusconi, Prime Minister of Italy, in the general debate of the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, on 23 September 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you could arrange to have the text of the present letter and the annexed statement circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under the agenda item 9.

(Signed) **Pak Gil Yon**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 24 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Statement of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by the President of France and the Prime Minister of Italy in the general debate on 23 September 2003

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to express its great regret over the distorted and prejudiced stances taken by the President of France and the Prime Minister of Italy in their statements concerning the nuclear issue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America. From this point of view, the delegation categorically rejects their allegations.

The nuclear issue is, in essence, an outcome of the hostile policy of the United States to isolate and stifle the Democratic People's Republic of Korea politically, economically and militarily. It has originated from deep-rooted hostility, denial of our system and refusal to coexist peacefully with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains consistent in its position to resolve the nuclear issue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States peacefully through dialogue and negotiation. The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is our ultimate goal, our initiative and the earnest desire of the entire Korean nation.

In line with this, at the three-party and six-party talks, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea set a goal of achieving the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and advanced realistic and reasonable proposals for the attainment of that goal. The proposal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea contains a detailed account of a package deal and the order of simultaneous actions for the comprehensive and fair solution of the nuclear issue, such as the change by the United States of its hostile policy on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the conclusion of a non-aggression treaty between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States, the renunciation of the nuclear programme and normalization of relations. Simultaneous action is a realistic means of denuclearizing the Korean peninsula, and any objection to it is tantamount to refusal.

However, the United States only reiterated its unilateral call for the renunciation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear programme first without any reference to a change of its hostile policy on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is a key to the settlement of the nuclear issue. The United States has acted imprudently by asserting that a non-aggression treaty was not necessary. It also said that it was not interested in it.

We have already made clear our position that we will abandon our nuclear programme if the United States clearly indicates its intention of peaceful coexistence with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through the conclusion

of a non-aggression treaty and proves in reality its change of hostile policy on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

If France and Italy are truly interested in the fair settlement of the nuclear issue, they should properly understand the true facts of the issue and urge the United States to change its hostile policy on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.
